
* YOU CAN'T FOOL TOBY *
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* Property of Johnnie Spear. *
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CAST

TOBY QUITS ENGRAM COMEDY

JOHN ENGRAM LEAD

PA ENGRAM CHARACTER OLD MAN

MA ENGRAM CHARACTER OLD LADY

ADELE ST. CLAIRE..... HEAVY

SETTING

Simple old fashioned living room of the Engrams. Comfortable but very plain in style. Doors R. and L. and C, either window or Door.

PROPS

Living room table

Living room chairs

Table lamp.

Newspaper

Letter(loaded)

Suitcase.

Legal papers.

YOU CAN'T FOOL TOBY.

(ABIJIAH IS DISCOVERED SEATED AT TABLE READING THE EVENING NEWSPAPER)

MA

(ENTERS FROM L. WITH HER SEWING) Where's Toby, Pa? He aint got home for supper for three nights now. Here it is almost eight o'clock.

PA

Well, ma, since we let him drive that Ford car, he's just been no good for nothin'. Bet he's playin' around them town gals.

MA

Well, I hope he is. Maybe if he takes an interest in the girls, he'll clean himself up and dress like a human being. You and Toby both look like you didn't have a dime to your names. Lawsakes! One to look at us would never think we was the richest people in Goose County. You have got the same suit you've been wearing for fifteen years.

PA

Well, it's still a good suit, Ma. What's the use throwing it away until it wears out? That's a waste of money.

MA

As if we didn't have the money to waste. Why look the money we made from that last oil lease would buy the biggest clothing concern in the countr

PA

Aw, quit yer stewin', Ma. I don't care what you want to do with the money. If you want to buy the moon, I'll say go ahead. Money don't mean a darn thing to me. It aint brought me no more happiness than before I had it.

MA

Oh, of course! Of course! Just slp along. As long as your belly's full of food your satisfied. I thought when we struck oil on our land it would mean a swell home in the city*---

PA

Nothin' doin'. I don't want to live in the city. Too much noise! Don't bother me now, Ma. I'm readin' in the paper where a woman gets a hot for disturbing her husband's piece.

MA

You old devil, I'll disturb your peace any time I want to. Oh I wonder where Toby is. Why don't he come on home with the mail. Sent him to town to get the mail this morning, and he aint home yet. I'm going to set down on that boy. I ought to set down on both of you. I just ought to make you take some pride in yourselves. We've got money and we ought to spend it. (NOISE OF AUTOMOBILE OFF R.) There's the good for nothing kid now!

TOBY

(ENTERS WITH SOME MAIL AND A NEWSPAPER) Hello, folks! Supper over!

MA

Is supper over? You know good and well it is. What do you mean by staying away from the farm all day? Don't you think you ought to be home once in awhile. What's a home for any ways?

TOBY

A home is a place to go when everything else is closed up.

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PA
Toby, what have you been doing in the town--sparkin' some girl.

TOBY
Nope---they don't call it sparkin' any more, Pa. They call it necking.

PA
I suppose you were out butting yourself a piece of neck. Well, what 's the catch in it? Are you out necking some girl with the idea of makin' her your permanent neck? In other words, are you going to get married?

TOBY
NU, sirree! I am not. Pa, there's only way to get married nowadays.

PA
How's that?

TOBY
That's to marry an old womanninety nine years old with one foot in the grave, the other on a banana peel, and a million dollars!

MA
Such talk! Toby, where do you learn all them things you say?

TOBY
Down at the Meadows Hotel in town. I listen to all the traveling men in the lobby.

MA
Oh, so that's where you've been all day, listening to a lot of traveling men with nothing on their minds but dirt. Toby, you'll be ruined. Don't you dare to go picking up what those traveling men tell.

TOBY
Oesh, they sure did tell some good jokes to day. Say, Pa, you ought to heard the joke that I heard. It's about a traveling man and a country girl. Now the traveling man he--

PA
Toby, I don't want to hear none of that low stuff.

TOBY
This aint low dad, the traveling man takes the country girl up in an airplane---and she grabs ahold of his joy stick and--

MA
Toby, that's enough. Let it go.

TOBY
Yeah, that's what the traveling man said.

PA
Toby, we've heard enough. Besides I'm trying to read the paper.

TOBY
All right, but this is sure a hot story. I'll wait till my brother John gets home from the city, and tell him if he aint already heard it.

MA
Speaking of John, did you get the mail I sent you for at the post office?

TOBY
Yep here it is. Say, ma, I had to lay out a couple of the old hens

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today. They was talking in the postoffice, and old lady Tolliver says, "Well, it looks to me like with all the money that the Engrams have got they ought to spend some of it, and buy a new home and dress up"

MA

(TO PA) See! There I told you. Getting me talked about all over the town. (BEGINS TO CRY) I'm going to tell John when he gets home. He'll see that somethings done about. John's my favorite son; he tries to keep up appearances. Now listen here, Pa, we're going to build a new home--

PA

No, we're not! We've lived in this home for thirty years and it's still good enough. Just because I've got money aint no sign we'll waste it.

MA

Well, I don't care it isn't right to me. (BLUBBERS)

TOBY

Aw, gee, Ma, don't cry. Let me tell you the story about the traveling man, and--

MA

Shut your mouth!

PA

Let her go, Toby. She likes to cry. It does her good!

MA

(OPENS LETTER) Oh, I'm just so disgusted. Maybe I'll find a little consolation in reading a letter from my dear boy, John. He's my boy! Just like his mother. I'm so proud of him---

TOBY

What's John say in the letter, Ma. When's he coming home!

MA

(READS) He's---(BEGINS SOBBING LOUDER) Oh My God! My God!

PA

What the devil's the matter.

MA

(BETTS HER HEAD AND SOBS LOOKS AT LETTER) Oh! He's done it! (OPENS MOUTH WIDE)

TOBY

Gosh, ma, you got a mouth like the subway!

PA

What's the matter, Ma? What's John done!

MA

Oh at last, at last I've become one. After all these years---

PA

What, Ma, you old fool, what?

MA

Pa, I'm a mother-in-law!

JOHN

Why, Adele, of course not. And dearest, I want you to like my folks. They---they're not much for looks, but they've got a heart of gold!

ADELE

With as much oil leases as they are supposed to have, they should have a heart of gold!

JOHN

(LAUGHS LIGHTLY) I'll call them. (GOES L.) Mother, oh mother!

MA

(OFF STAGE) I'm coming, dear. .Pa---, Toby, come on in. John and his wife are here! (ENTERS) Oh, John, my boy. (EMBRACE JOHN) And this is your wife? (TOBY AND PA ENTER STAND BEHIND MA. MA PUTS ON THE SOCIETY STUFF) My! my! I'm so chawmed to meet you!

ADELE

(HAIF AMUSED AND HAIF COLD) Indeed!

MA

I knew my boy was a good picker, and he wouldn't bring nothin' home that we couldn't be proud of. Now this is our home, and John's home so just make yourself to home. Here's my husband--come over here, Pa, and watch yourself.

PA

(SPITS ON HIS HANDS) Howdy, do I'm right down tickled to see ye. Allow me to say that John's taste for women is gettin' better all the time. The last one he had picked out wasn't no good. She---

JOHN

(BUS.) Shhh!

PA

Well, she wasn't; she was dishefaced! So you be from the Standings in St. Claire, eh?

ADELE

No, I'm a St. Claire ~~from~~ Standing.

PA

(SITS DOWN) Well, I'm an Ingram from settin' down. Well, mayke your self to hom. You ~~add~~ ma can get in the kitchen and cook some supper if you're hungry. We already et ourselvesthough.

ADELE

What! I cook my own meals?

JOHN

Why of course not, dear. Mother will do all the cooking.

MA

Why sure. If she can't cook. I'll teach her how.

ADELE

(SHARPLY) I have no desire to learn!

JOHN

You see, Mother, Adele has never had to do anything like--like--well, you know---I really think, Father, that we ought to hire a cook and some extra servants.

PA
The devil you do? Well, we aint goin' to. The old lady over here's done the work of this house for forty years and just because we're rich I aint gonna have none of them duke waiters and Frenchie maids.

ADELE
Well, I can assure you, John, that if I stay here, I'll have a maid to dressme.

PA
Now that's a lot of darn unnecessary expense. If you can't dress yourself in the morning, why I'll--

MA
You'll what? (ROLLS UP SLEEVES)

PA
I'll be glad to let you do it, Ma.

ADELE
Well, John, have I met all of this family. (LOOKS AT TOBY) Who's that hired man?

TOBY
Hired man, hell!

ADELE
Mercy! (HAIF SHOCKED)

TOBY
I'm John's brother, Toby!

ADELE
Oh you are. (TRIES TO SUPPRESS LAUGHTER FINALLY BREAKS OUT) John's brother! Oh actually!

TOBY
What's so funny about it. If you're laughin' at me, Miss High-Brow, I'll give you something to laugh about.

MA
Toby, you behave!

ADELE
Oh you mustn't be offended. I like to laugh. (LAUGHS) Especially when I see something funny!

TOBY
Oh so you like to laugh, huh? (GOES OVER TO HER) Well, did you ever hear the one about the traveling salesman and the farmer's daughter?

ADELE
(FREEZES UP) Sir!

MA
That's the end!

TOBY
Naw, that's just the startin' of it. The traveling salesman says to to the gal, "Baby, I got something for you!"

ADELE

I do not care to hear that. John, where she is her, back in my bed room?

MA

Oh you mean your bed room. You and John will sleep in the south room.

ADELE

I am very sorry but I prefer a separate bed-room unless you have a room with twin beds.

TOBY

What the heck? Just got married and gonna sleep alone? That aint what a traveling man would do.

ADELE

It is not healthy for two people to sleep together.

TOBY

Well, I've heard it said it'll get you down?

JOHN

Toby, what are you trying to do--insult my wife? Mother, Adele will sleep in the south room, and I---I'll sleep well wherever you want me to. Come, Adele, I'll show you the room. I know you 'll like it dear. (STARTS FOR L.)*

TOBY

Gosh, with her high falutin' ideas, John, you and her aint going to help increase the population a darn bit. Say, I'll tell you that story about the traveling man after while.

ADELE

I do not want to hear it! (EXITS L. WITH JOHN)

MA

(LOOKS AT PA. ALL REMAIN QUIET AWHILE) Pa, our boy has made a mistake. That woman is not a good wife.

TOBY

I'll say she aint. Poor John aint gonna have no fun at all. She acts like she was too good for us.

PA

Well, ma, John will just have to find out for himself. I'm hopin' she don't make him unhappy. Maybe she'll see the right way of livin' after she's here awhile. I aint got much to say cause I never could understand women.

MA

Well, I'm a good judge of a woman or a man, and I've got to do a lot of re-makin' of my boy, John's wife. (PA AND MA EXIT L.)

TOBY

Well, I aint much of a judge of humans, but I'm a darn good judge of cattle and I think that dame is just a mongrel heifer tyrin' to act like a thorobred. I know one think I'll tell her my story about the traveling salesman and the country girl before this day is over or my name aint Toby Q uits Engram.2 (EXITS)

***** NUMBER TWO *****

JOHN
(ENTERS WITH MA) Well, Mother, what do you think of my wife?

MA
She's pretty, John, and I---I hope that you are happy with her.

JOHN
Mother, I love Adele better than anything in my life. Of course she was disappointed in this old house. You know I had told her of our wealth in oil lands, and naturally she had heard about it. She expects us to be living in a mansion instead of this--when you come to think of it, Mother, you and dad aren't living the way your money would permit you to.

MA
Oh, I know it, but your pa just won't let me. John, I saw the look in your wife's eyes when she saw me and Pa, and--and Toby! She just seemed to repulse me. I guess I looked so old fashioned and frazzled out. Oh, John, I didn't want you to be ashamed of me! (STARTS TO CRY)

JOHN
(PUTS ARMS AROUND HER) Now, Mother, no matter what you looked like I wouldn't be ashamed of you, but I am going to speak to dad. I wish he'd turn this property and hand over to me. It's going to be mine--someday, and he'd just as well let me have it now.

TOBY
(ENTERS FOLLOWING ADELE WHO IS WALKING AS THOUGH DISGUSTED) A--and the traveling salesman gets her down behind the barn, and she says Oh don't stick that thing in me. You see he had a big long rake, and--

ADELE
Oh, stop it! Stop it! I never heard such talking in my life. John, can't you do something about your brother?

JOHN
Toby, if you don't leave my wife alone, there's going to be something serious happening around here.

TOBY
Aw, gosh, I'm just tryin' to entertain her. Gee whiz, any body ought to enjoy a nice clean traveling man story.

MA
Toby, no lady wants to hear those things.

TOBY
Maybe she aint a lady?

ADELE
What?

TOBY
Well, I mean maybe she aint as nice a lady as she lets on to be. Gosh I was listening at her door last night, and she stumbled over a stool and the words she said would have beat any traveling man's.

ADELE
Indeed, and what business did you have listening at my door?

JOHN

Toby, I'm not going to tell you again to stop annoying Adele.

MA

Yes, Toby Q uits if you don't stop it, I'll have your dad lock you in the attic.

ADELE

What's his name? Toby Q uits? (LAUGHS) Q uits! What an odd name. How were you ever named Q uits?

TOBY

My dad gave me that name? You see it was just shortly after I was born. Mom and me was in the room together and pa hadn't seen me then. Well, Pa, came in and took a look at me, and shook his head several times, and finally said, "Well, Ma, I guess we'll just have to call it Quits!"

ADELE

Are you the oldest one in the family?

TOBY

No, grandma's oldern'n me. MY pa's an optimist.

ADELE

An optimist why?

TOBY

Well, after he got me---he didn't give up, ma says he's still tryin' to better.

MA

Toby, that's enough for you. You come with me. I'm going to wash your mouth out with soap.

TOBY

Wait a minute. I want to give the lady her pocket book. (HANDS ADELE PURSE) You dropped this.

ADELE

(SNATCHES IT QUICKLY) My purse! Give it to me at once. Did you open it? (LOOKS THROUGH IT QUICKLY)

TOBY

What do you care? Do you want to hear the story about the traveling salesman---

MA

(YANKS TOBY OFF) You come here!

TOBY

(DUCKS BACK SEVERAL TIMES MA YANKS HIM OFF EACH TIME TOBY TRIES TO TELL SO MUCH OF THE STORY)

JOHN

Adele, I'm sorry if Toby bothers your dear.

ADELE

Oh, he doesn't bother me any more than do these unpleasant surroundings I think I shall have to ask you to take me to the city, John. I do not like it here at all. Why doesn't your father fix this place up like it should be? Is he a tight wad or something? (PA ENTERS R.

UNOBSERVED)

JOHN

I don't know, Adele. Dad's just set in his ways. Some day all of this will be mine, then I'm going to do things a lot different.

ADELE

Why don't you get him to turn it over to you now. You could let him have all he wanted to spend, and then you'd have full charge of his oil leases.

JOHN

Well, I do wish dad would do that. I've talked to him about it.

ADELE

(PUTTING HER ARMS AROUND HIM) And, dear, when he does, I want you to deed over this farm to me and all the oil wells on it, will you?

JOHN

Why, this farm is the richest farm of all his holdings, Adele.

ADELE

(LOOKING AT HIM) Am I not worth it?

JOHN

Why--why---yes of course. You're worth a million like it.

ADELE

I would advise you to see the old man soon. I'm going to my room now. (EXITS L.)

PA

(COMES DOWN) Well, John, I've been thinking over what you said to me the other day.

JOHN

Oh you have, dad?

PA

Yep! (HANDS HIM SOME PAPERS) John, someday you're going to get all of my oil land and everything. I just guess there's no use in you waiting until I die. Here's the whole thing. Now my fortune is yours to do what you like with it. I suppose you'll see that ma and I and Toby get a place to stay and the things we want?

JOHN

Why, dad, you can have everything you want. Gee, I--I didn't expect you to turn it all over like this. I---

PA

That's all right, John. It represents a lot of money, but I don't give a darn about it. Well, I guess I'll go and tell Ma what I've done. (EXITS R.)

JOHN

(CALLS L.) Adele! Adele! Come here. (SHE EXITS) Look, sweetheart, dad has given me everything. Now, Honey, you can have this place. (HANDS HER PAPERS) Here's the papers! I suppose you're going to build a big house here! Gee, I'm all excited. I must go and see mother, and see what she thinks about it. (EXITS L.)

ADELE

(STANDS AND LOOKS AT THE PAPERS) Well, you poor sap, I know what I think about it, and I know sht I'm going to do just as soon as this

property is made legally mine by a Notary Public.

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TOBY

(ENTERS) Hey, I want to tell you the story about the traveling salesman and the farmers daughter. The farmers daughter says to the traveling salesman, "Now what I want to know is, do you like fish----?" (SHE SCREAMS AND TOBY FOLLOWS HER OFF ADLIBBING)

***** NUMBER THREE *****

MA

(FOLLOWS PA ON) Pa Ingram, are you plum gone crazy. What's the matter with you? Turning over every thing to John. Why he's been to a Notary Public and turned this farm over to his wife.

PA

Well, what of it?

MA

She'll run us right out of our home. I can't understand what possessed you. We've got years ahead of us to live, and then you do that.

TOBY

(ENTERS R.) My gosh, pa, did you turn over this farm to that Adele woman of Johns. Shucks fire! If you wanted to throw the place away why didn't you give it to me?

PA

Because you're not of age! Now, don't none of you tell me what to do. I know my business!

JOHN

(ENTERS R. WITH ADELE THEY HAVE COATS ON) Well, dear, this old place is now yours.

ADELE

Yes, I own it now!

TOBY

Well, I guess I'd just as well get my ~~trunk~~ suit case packed now.

ADELE

You mean you all want to get your suit cases packed!

JOHN

What? Adele, what do you mean?

ADELE

I mean that I now own this place, and I'm going to ask you all to get out.

MA

You mean you are going to ask us to leave this old home?

PA

Lady, be you serious about that?

ADELE

I certainly am. I'm going to tear down this delapidated wreck with it's old fashioned country appearance, and I'm going to erect a modern structure here where I can entertain my friends from the city.

PA

For thirty years we have lived in this old place. Ma and me came out here when this was nothing but a barren waste---

ADELE

(SNEERING) It's little better than that now!

PA

First I staked out a claim, then I built a rough little cabin. In that little shanty you were born, John! Ma and me struggled through ten years of mighty hard sleadin' tryin' to make a farm that was no good pay. Then they struck oil. We became the riches family in Goose Count

ADELE

Is it necessary for you to tell over your family history?

JOHN

(TAKING ADELE BY THE SHOULDERS) Adele, what's come over you? What are you trying to do?

ADELE

Nothing! This property is now mine and what I do is of no concern to you.

JOHN

Oh so you mean that you were planning this all along? As soon as I turned the property over to you, you would throw my folks out of their old home.

MA

Oh, Pa, I told you it was foolishness to do a thing like this! Now I'll have to leave my old home, my---

PA

Well, what of it? Ma, you always said this wasn't good enough for us after we struck oil. You harped on it for week in and week out---now you've got a chance to get away from it all---

MA

But where will we go? She's got everything!

JOHN

Well, she's going to give it back!

ADELE

I have something to say about that. You can't make me give it back unless I want to.

JOHN

Do you think that I'm going to let you turn my folks out like this?

ADELE

I do not see how you can prevent it!

JOHN

I'll divorce you!

ADELE

I do not care. I don't love you I never did. I only wanted to get ahold of this property. Now you see how you and I stand. Hurry up! I'll give you all just one hour to get out! (GRABS MA BY ARM) Come on you old chromo!

TOBY

Say let go my mother's arm or I'll sock you one in the jaw.

ADELE

Oh indeed. (LAUGHS) Really I would rather have you tell me the story about the traveling salesman!

TOBY

Well, I'll do that, and that aint all I'll tell. Listen, John, you can divorce this woman, cause you never was married to her.

ADELE

What are you saying?

TOBY

Just this---when I found your pocket book I found a letter from your husband--your real husband. (PRODUCES LETTER)

ADELE

(REACHES FOR LETTER) Give me that letter, you pick pocket!

TOBY

Not till I get done readin' it. (READS) "Dear, idarling wife, when you have trimmed that poor boob and gotten the money and place away from him let me know and we will give them the air. Signed your loving husband."

ADELE

Oh well, that doesn't necessarily prove in court that I am married. You could have forged that.

TOBY

Yes, but I couldn't have forged this marriage license I found in your trunk!

ADELE

Oh!

TOBY

This woman is married a man by the name of Robert Carlisle in New York city. Her marriage to you was only a crooked fake, John, and she is goin' to jail for bigamy! Now, I'll tell you that story about the traveling salesman. He gets down in the barn, and she says "Oh what big feet you have!"

ADELE

(HARB)aw, I've heard that one before you poor simp!

TOBY

You heard the one about the traveling salesman and the farmer's daughter

ADELE

You sap, I'm the farmer's daughter! (HANDS ON HIPS)

TOBY

(SPITS) Well, I thought I recognized you! Any way you can't fool me, Tobias quits Engram, and you're going to jail for bigamy.

ADELE

Very well, that makes no difference. After I get out I'll still own this property and I can turn you country bumpkins out of it.

PA
(COMING DOWN) I wouldn't be too damn sure about that!

ADELE
What do you mean? John had the papers transferred over to me today.
It was a legal proceeding.

PA
But how do you know that John had the right to do that?

ADELE
Because you gave him the property yesterday.

PA
Oh that's where you're all wrong. The papers I gave him yesterday were a fake.

JOHN
Father!

PAT
They were not worth the paper they were writ on. John, I just done that to see what this dame you married really was and now I think she's proven herself to all of us. Miss, your baggage is all packed, and you'll do us the favor of getting out fast and with no bag sass or I'll kick you in your---

MA
Pa!

PA
In your disposition! Now Go! (POINTS TO DOOR)

ADELE
Well, aren't we country rubessmart! Well, I must say adieu. (LAUGHS)
(TO JOHN) Good bye, my country husband! (STARTS UP) It's time to plow the corn.

TOBY
(GRABS HER ARM) Yes, and we'll send you an ear of it in the jail house.

ADELE
(TRYING TO JARK LOOSE) Let go of me! What are you trying to do?

TOBY
You're going to jail for bigamy, and I'm going to tell you that story about the traveling salesman.

ADELE
Oh hell let me tell you one! (WHISPERS IN HIS EAR)

TOBY
(LOOKS SHOCKED) My God!

F I N A L E